

Appl. No. 10/617,458
Atty. Docket No. 6808D
Amdt. dated Nov. 10, 2005
Reply to Office Action of August 10, 2005
Customer No. 27752

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a stabilized extensible necked material comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing a neckable material having a width;
 - b) applying a tensioning force to the neckable material to neck the material; and
 - c) subjecting the necked material to mechanical stabilization, mechanical stabilization comprising subjecting the necked material to incremental stretching in a direction which is not parallel to the width of the neckable material, so as to provide a stabilized extensible necked material.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~ 1 wherein said incremental stretching comprises feeding the necked material through a nip formed by a pair of incremental stretching rollers.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 3 wherein each said incremental stretching roller comprises a plurality of teeth and a plurality of grooves.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1 wherein ~~said patterned compression rollers~~ the incremental stretching provides ~~provide~~ a plurality of continuous-compression stabilizing embossment embossments across the entire width of the stabilized extensible necked material.

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7. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said neckable material is a web selected from the group consisting of a bonded carded web of fibers, a web of spunbonded fibers, a web of meltblown fibers, and a multilayer material including at least one of said webs.
8. (Original) The method of Claim 7 wherein said fibers comprise a polymer selected from the group consisting of polyolefins, polyesters, and polyamides.
9. (Original) The method of Claim 8 wherein said polyolefin is selected from the group consisting of one or more of polyethylene, polypropylene, polybutene, ethylene copolymers, propylene copolymers, and butane copolymers.
10. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said neckable material is a composite material comprising a mixture of fibers and one or more other materials selected from the group consisting of wood pulp, staple fibers, particulates, and super-absorbent materials.
11. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the additional step of:
 - d) joining the stabilized extensible necked material to an elastic member.
12. (Original) The method of Claim 11 wherein the elastic member comprises an elastomeric polymer selected from the group consisting of elastic polyesters, elastic polyurethanes, elastic polyamides, and elastic A-B-A' block copolymers wherein A and A' are the same or different thermoplastic polymer, and wherein B is an elastomeric polymer block.
13. (Original) The method of Claim 11 wherein said elastic member comprises an elastomeric film.
14. (Original) The method of Claim 11 wherein said elastic member comprises an elastomeric scrim.
15. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a stabilized extensible necked nonwoven web comprising the steps of:

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- a) providing a neckable nonwoven web having a width;
 - b) applying a tensioning force to the neckable nonwoven web to neck the nonwoven web; and
 - c) subjecting the necked nonwoven web to mechanical stabilization, the mechanical stabilization comprising subjecting the necked material to incremental stretching in a direction which is not parallel to the width of the neckable material, so as to provide a plurality of incrementally stretched stabilizing embossments which extend across the width of the neckable nonwoven web so as to provide a stabilized extensible necked nonwoven web.
16. (Canceled)
17. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~16~~ 15 wherein ~~said stabilized extensible necked nonwoven web~~ the stabilizing embossments comprise comprises a plurality of linear embossments extending continuously across the entire width of the stabilized extensible necked nonwoven web.
18. (Original) The method of Claim 15 wherein said neckable nonwoven web is a web selected from the group consisting of a bonded carded web of fibers, a web of spunbonded fibers, a web of meltblown fibers, and a multilayer material including at least one of said webs.
19. (Original) The method of Claim 15 further comprising the step of:
- d) joining the stabilized extensible necked nonwoven web to an elastic member.
20. (Original) The method of Claim 19 wherein said elastic member comprises an elastomeric scrim.
21. (New) The method of Claim 6 wherein the stabilizing embossments are disposed in a pattern selected from the group consisting of teeth and grooves, linear

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embossments, curved embossments, sinusoidal embossments, and zig-zag embossments.

22. (New) The method of Claim 6 wherein the neckable material has a direction of travel and the stabilizing embossments are disposed at an angle greater than 90 degrees and less than 180 degrees with respect to the direction of travel.
23. (New) The method of Claim 1 wherein the neckable material is nonelastic and wherein the method further comprises the step of:
 - d) joining the stabilized extensible necked material to an elastic member.